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NEWS FROM

FIFTH WARD ENRICHMENT PROGRAM, INC.

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Fifth Ward Enrichment Program Founder Ernest McMillan Retires after 23 Years of Service

Heart of Houston dinner planned in honor of founder on Friday, June 8, 2007

HOUSTON (March 12, 2007) -- Ernest McMillan, founder of the Fifth Ward Enrichment Program (FWEP), retired on March 6, after 23 years of service to the organization and the Fifth Ward community. McMillan will reside in his hometown, Dallas, Texas. His successor will be Charles Savage, FWEP chief of operations for the past 11 years.

The 9th annual Heart of Houston event, titled "At the Heart of the Man," will honor McMillan for his vision and tenacity in turning around the lives of young African-American and Hispanic young men and helping to enrich the Fifth Ward community as a whole. The event will be held at 6 p.m. on Friday, June 8, 2007, at the Hyatt Regency Houston, 1200 Louisiana Street. KPRC Local 2 News Anchor Jerome Gray will be the master of ceremonies. FWEP alumni and supporters are asked to contact the event coordinator (MWH Public Relations, 281-213-9554) for involvement in a special tribute to McMillan.

McMillan recalls how 23 years ago, "Fifth Ward was commonly referred to as the 'Bloody Fifth' as crack houses, AIDS, and youths packing AK-47's and Uzi's for defending the block were emerging forces on the scene," he said. "It may seem like an eternity ago, but for me, those days and nights have rocketed by."

McMillan could not sit idly by and watch these images overtake the community. He and community leaders Joe Briggs and Rudy Wagner, now deceased, went into action and launched FWEP in 1984 as a response to the community's skyrocketing rates of teenage pregnancy, crime, drug use, high school dropout rate and a lack of responsible African-American and Hispanic fathers.

Two decades later, the non-profit organization is still running strong.

A study conducted by the Texas Youth Commission over a three-year period showed FWEP is effective at changing attitudinal and behavioral changes when the young men are involved in the

program for two or more years. Participation in the program for a two-year period brought about significant increases in the boys' self-concepts, self-reliance and conduct ratings.

Following in the footsteps of the founder of FWEP is no small challenge," said Savage.

McMillan has provided 23 years of uninterrupted service to the community. My priority, my charge, is to continue that service, and even strengthen the foundation so that my successor will have the same, unimpaired opportunity that awaits me – continued service to youth who are in dire need of what FWEP provides."

For Heart of Houston dinner tickets or sponsorship information contact MWH Public Relations, 281.213.9554 or info@mwhpublicrelations.com.

About the Fifth Ward Enrichment Program

For 23 years, the Fifth Ward Enrichment Program has provided services and programs designed to empower boys to become responsible men, and productive members of their families and community. Its model program has served over 2,300 disadvantaged and at-risk families, 3,800 school-aged youths, and 275 young fathers in more than 20 support services through six program components. For more information regarding the FWEP, go to www.fwepinc.org.